

Remarks

Initially, Applicant should like to thank Examiner's Hamilton and Shoap for their courtesies in granting recent telephone interviews to his attorney. The substance of those conversations is set forth in the interview summary mailed June 6, 2005. It should be noted however that the prior art reference to Rhodes was discussed as well as the reference to Pruonto, et al.

It should also be noted that, during the course of those conversations, Applicant's attorney proposed amending Claim 1 to include a limitation to emphasize the spacial relationship that exists between the body of the claimed tension board and the resiliently deformable bow member. Specifically, the following addition (shown in italics) was suggested (the non-italicized wording is reproduced for context only):

at least one resiliently deformable bow member comprised of a strip of material having opposite end portions fixedly attached at mutually spaced different points along a first edge of said body and projecting generally arcuately from said different points *laterally over the surface of the table when so mounted ...*

Applicant's attorney understood the Examiners to acknowledge that the foregoing recitation might serve to sufficiently distinguish over the prior art, while expressing reservations however about the possible need to carry out further searching.

It will be noted that the currently amended version of Claim 1 includes the foregoing proposed limitation. In addition, all references to the "table" have been

amended to recite a “cutting machine table” for consistency with the first reference made to a table in the claim as it was originally submitted.

In its *original* form, Claim 1 required the bow member to “deform resiliently toward said body to cooperate with upstanding structure on the table to apply *lateral force* to a workpiece pushed therebetween.” (emphasis added) It is implicit in that functional language that the strip of material comprising the bow member must “project laterally over the surface of the cutting machine table when so mounted,” which language (presently added) serves therefore only to more explicitly emphasize the structural relationship that is necessary to achieve the function originally recited.

Applicant continues to disagree that either Pruonto et al. or Rhodes fairly teaches a structure comprised of a resiliently deformable bow member attached along a first *edge* of any body disclosed therein. Irrespective of that, however, language has been added to the claims to avoid any question that the opposite end portions of the strip comprising the deformable bow member are attached along the *peripheral* edge of the body, thus further emphasizing a fundamental distinction over the prior art applied.

It seems perfectly clear no strip of material that might be found to exist in the device of either cited reference, mounted upon the surface of a table (or of other structure), could “deform ... toward said body to cooperate with upstanding structure on the table [or other mounting structure] to apply lateral force to a workpiece.” As noted above, the limitation calling for the strip of material to

project laterally over the surface of the cutting machine table simply makes more explicit the structural relationship that is inherently necessary to achieve the recited function, and thus emphasizes the distinctions that reside in the claimed tension board over the prior art.

The subject matter of Claim 9-14 has been acknowledged to be patentable over the prior art. In accordance with that acknowledgement, Claim 9 is now presented in independent form.

Finally, the Examiners have indicated that claims directed to the instant tension board, in combination with a cutting machine, may well be allowable. Not only has Claim 1 been amended to emphasize the features of Applicant's tension board that enable its use with a cutting machine, but moreover new Claim 18 has been presented to expressly define the combination. Apart from its positive recitation of the cutting machine, Claim 18 is directly parallel to Claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that no further searching would be required for the examiner to confirm the allowability of the presently claimed subject matter.

In view of the foregoing, passage of the application to allowance, with all claims presently presented, is believed to be clearly in order and is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner disagree, however, and feel that further modifications are necessary to place the application into condition for allowance, he is urged to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any additional changes that might be suggested.

Entry of the foregoing amendments is believed to be in order, in any event,
as placing the application into better condition for appeal, should that be
necessary.

Respectfully submitted,
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I, IRA S. DORMAN, hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited
with the United States Postal Service, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed as
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